



DATE: September 4, 2002

TO: EMS Communications Stakeholders

FROM: Jeff Clet, Chairperson
EMS Vision Access Committee

SUBJECT: Emergency Medical Dispatch Standards Document

The attached draft Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Standards document is the product of numerous meetings by the EMS Vision Access Committee conducted over a two-year period, and was developed for usage within the 9-1-1 universal access system. The intent of the document is intended to provide a voluntary, statewide EMD standard to encourage both primary and secondary public safety answering points to use medical pre-arrival instructions and EMD protocols. The Access Committee believes that establishing a State-wide EMD Standard is the critical first step to the ultimate goal of obtaining qualified dispatcher immunity.

The EMS Vision Access Committee is one of six committees that was established by the Commission on EMS and supported by the EMS Authority to assist in the redesign of the EMS System in California. Each committee is composed of members from multi-disciplinary EMS stakeholder groups. Future planning efforts for EMS will be based on the work done by the Vision committees (Access, Education and Personnel, Funding, Governance and Medical Control, System Evaluation and Improvement, and Prevention and Public Education).

In development of the EMD Standards document, the Access Committee made a fundamental decision to create a document that would take an approach to be “enabling” rather than “limiting”. That is, specific areas of disagreement were set aside in order to develop a consensus document that would not stall or cause the process to fail. During the course of many meetings, some areas of disagreement surrounding Medical Direction and Governance developed between some constituent groups. To allow the group to continue to move forward, the Access Committee produced the attached EMD Standards document that reflects all of the core components of an EMD program and remains silent on issues related to Medical Direction and Governance. The result of this philosophy was the creation of the attached document.

As is noted within the document, a fundamental issue that was agreed upon by all Stakeholder Groups early on was the idea of self-determination at the Local level with regard to the decision whether or not to implement an EMD program. It was never the intent of the State to mandate EMD standards, or require a jurisdiction to provide EMD.

The EMS Vision Access Committee reviewed and approved the draft EMD Standards document on August 23, 2002, with two abstaining votes; one from the Emergency Medical Services Administrators Association of California and one from the California Emergency Nurses Association. As a result of the Committee’s approval, the EMD document has been forwarded to the Vision Leadership Team for review and approval. Although the document has been identified as “standards”, the Committee determined that the ultimate document format (i.e.

guidelines, standards, regulations) should be subject to change as the document moves forward as a basis for eventual qualified dispatch immunity legislation.

I would like to thank all of the participating stakeholders for their work and commitment in the development of the EMD document. If not for the dedicated stakeholders that participated throughout this process, the EMD document would have never been realized. It was through your tireless effort and dedication to the ultimate goal that there exists today the opportunity to have a consensus product in the form of the attached EMD document. I would also like to thank the stakeholder groups who took the time to provide valuable input on the document during the last comment period. It is important to note that many of the stakeholder comments were incorporated into the revised document.

Please contact your Stakeholder Chairperson or Carol Biancalana of the EMS Authority with any questions at (916) 322-4336, or at the following e-mail address: cbiancalana@emsa.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeff Clet
Chairperson
EMS Vision Access Committee